

Planting a Settlement



The Powhatan Indians, English and Angolans from West Central Africa were three cultures that came together at Jamestown in the early 1600s. Growing food was very important to each group. Let's discover the foods each group grew and compare the farming tools and methods they used.

The Powhatans

In the Powhatan culture, the farming was mostly done by the women and children. More than half of their food came from farming.



In the exhibit, what two plants is the woman with the baby growing?

The seasons are very important to people who grow all their food. Go over to the seasons display and answer the questions below:



How many different seasons did the Powhatans have? Which crop was most important to the Powhatans? How do you know? Can you find five plants the Powhatans did not grow, but gathered?



The Angolans

In Angolan society, as in Powhatan society, women and children tended the crops. The men of both cultures also worked to get food for their families. They hunted and fished, and some Angolan men tended herds of cattle. Both men and women used natural resources to produce trade goods. Find a touchable trade item made by the people of each culture.



The Angolans grew crops of sorghum, millet, yams and corn. Notice the tool the Angolan woman is using. What is the tool made of? Compare it to the tool used by the Powhatan woman. How are the tools different, and how are they the same?



Tobacco was first grown by American Indians. When Europeans started trading in Africa, the Angolans started raising tobacco.

How did the Angolans learn about tobacco? Trade and exploration were important ways for cultures of the past to learn about new crops, new foods and new tools!



Comparative Cultures

The English

In the English culture the men did most of the farming. When they planted a settlement in Virginia in 1607, they brought seeds of crops like barley and rye. Go to the Voyage to Virginia map and find Virginia and England. **How would the climates of these two countries compare? Would the English plants do well in Virginia? Why or why not? From whom could the English learn how to plant crops successfully here?**

Go to the Comparative Cultures area in the gallery. Look at the tools and touch them. Now watch the video. The hoe and the mortar and pestle have obvious uses. **How did the axe help each culture with farming?**

Mmm...I love to munch tobacco!!!



Tobacco became the main cash crop of Jamestown. In Virginia that meant that tobacco was actually used as money!



The English grew large crops of tobacco, which required a lot of land and workers. How did the English desire for land and labor affect the Powhatans and the Africans? Watch the African Object Theater presentation to learn how the need for workers affected the African culture. Now go to the big lighted map and push the buttons to find out how the Powhatan Indians were affected.

Children in colonial Virginia helped farm. Try to lift the bucket at the planter's house to see if you could do this work!

Did you find all the answers to the questions? There are more answers waiting for you outside!